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CAPITOL STUFF

By TED LEWIS

Washington, May 6—Before our Santo Domingo military venture subsides into the background category of dramatic events, it needs to be pointed out that from the very start complete information concerning what President Johnson was doing, and why, was made available to the nation and the world.

It was one of the few cases where historians could sit right down and put together chapter and verse, instead of having to wait for years to inspect secret archives full of position papers which timid bureaucrats thought should be concealed from the public.

The President himself, in this instance, was determined to see that a blow-by-blow account was presented. He not only went on nationwide TV three times in the first six days of the occupation developments but made two speeches locally and held at least three background briefings to clarify every aspect of the situation. And last night he saw to it that secret intelligence information was released which provided hard evidence of the way hard-core Communists had moved in to take over the rebellion.

So what? Well, it was an impressive performance of a President laying it on the line because of its stark contrast with the Presidential handling under Eisenhower and Kennedy of the two previous instances of a Communist takeover in this hemisphere.

The full story has yet to be told of the successful overturn of the Communist-controlled government of Guatemala in 1954 when Ike was President. And it will be years, if ever, before historians will be able to put together all the facts that caused the Bay of Pigs in April, 1961.

JFK Bitter Over Dulles' Cuban Advice

By sheer coincidence, right at the height of the Dominican Republic drama, some long-concealed details of both the Bay of Pigs mess and the Guatemala incident have turned up. If nothing more, they show how some people in authority have preferred to conceal rather than reveal what went on, even if the events occurred in the comparatively dim past.



Allen Dulles
He was sure on Bay of Pigs

There is, for example, the revelation by author Jack Bell in the just-out book, "The Johnson Treatment" (Doubleday, 305 pp, \$4.95), that John F. Kennedy principally blamed one man for the Bay of Pigs failure.

Bell, a veteran Associated Press Washington correspondent, reported that JFK was "personally bitter about the advice he got from Allen W. Dulles, head of the Central Intelligence Agency."

Bell quoted Kennedy as telling him (while pointing to a chair next to his desk) that "he (Dulles) sat there and he told me that he was more confident about the invasion of Cuba than he had been of success in Guatemala when he went in there."

"But I don't blame him," Kennedy added to Bell, "or anybody else for the Bay of Pigs disaster. It was my fault, and only mine, for ordering them to go ahead. I just didn't know how to evaluate the advice they gave me."

It had never come out before that Dulles was Kennedy's main target. Nor had it come out that Dulles considered the Cuban invasion had a better chance of success than the surreptitious CIA Guatemala project in 1954.

Details of Guatemala Invasion Trickle Out

In this connection, it was certainly clear to Eisenhower in 1954 that Dulles thought there was only a 20% chance of success against the Red-tainted Arbenz regime in Guatemala. Ike, in his book "Mandate for Change" on his first four White House years, said it was on the basis of this 20% chance that two P-51 fighter-bombers were supplied surreptitiously to the invading forces of Castillo Armas. The decision significantly contributed to Arbenz' fall.

In Ike's own account of the Guatemala situation he reveals how he responded when Dulles estimated a 20% chance of success with the two fighter planes and a "zero" chance without them. He told the then CIA chief: "Allen, that figure of 20% was persuasive. It showed me that you had thought this matter through realistically. If you had told me that the chances would be 90%, I would have had a much more difficult decision."

While it has been an open secret for years, there has never been official admission to date that the CIA rigged, financed and ran the entire anti-Communist invasion of Guatemala in 1954. Eisenhower's own published report of what happened behind the scenes carefully cloaked the CIA angles.

But details keep trickling out from time to time, and sometimes in the most hair-raising form. Whether true or false it will take years to determine.

Deal to Murder 12 Never Came Off

On Tuesday night an NBC television "documentary" on "The science of spying" included a report by a man identified as Fred Sherwood and described as an air attache at our Guatemala Embassy in the early 1950s.

"Several of us thought," related Sherwood, "that perhaps we could stop this movement (President Arbenz' swing to the left) by organizing something in the form of vigilantes or night riders. For example, there was a group that tried to bring in some Puerto Rican and Cuban gangsters who made an offer, a package deal so to speak, to kill or assassinate any 12 Communists within the country for \$50,000. We went around trying to raise money, but we were only successful in raising part of this and so this never came off."

All this spy-boy stuff is fascinating. But it is a relief that the days are over of undercover sneaky invasion operations to prevent Communism from getting another foothold in the Western Hemisphere. Johnson has served notice of that. He will just send in the marines pronto—and he can be depended on to provide the same wide open detailed account he did in the Dominican incident.